Amendment(s) to the Claims

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the present application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (currently amended) A scheduling system for use in broadcasting comprising:

i)   a scheduler for selecting and scheduling broadcast elements for broadcasting; and

ii)   a user input data store for storing [[user]] users' input data relating to broadcast elements; in which the scheduler is adapted to access the user input data store and to schedule broadcast elements, the scheduling of one or more broadcast elements being at least partially determined by stored [[user]] users' input data.

2 and 3.   (cancelled)

4.   (currently amended) A scheduling system according to Claim 1 wherein, in use, stored [[user]] users' input data comprises one or more broadcast elements.

5.   (currently amended) A scheduling system according to Claim 1 wherein, in use, stored [[user]] users' input data identifies one or more broadcast elements.

6.   (original) A scheduling system according to Claim 5 wherein at least one identified broadcast element comprises an item from a playlist.

7.   (previously presented) A scheduling system according to Claim 5 wherein at least one identified broadcast element comprises material sourced externally to the broadcasting system.

Response to Office Action of: April 10, 2008
Response Dated: October 10, 2008
Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR BROADCAST COMMUNICATIONS

App. No.: 10/550,180
Inventor: MUELLER
Examiner: ANDRAMUNO

8.   (original) A scheduling system according to Claim 7 wherein at least one identified broadcast element comprises live material.

9.   (previously presented) A scheduling system according to Claim 1 which further comprises an asset store for storing broadcast elements to be scheduled by the scheduler.

10.   (original) A scheduling system according to Claim 9 wherein the asset store is adapted to store data relating to the broadcast elements, in addition to storing broadcast elements.

11.   (previously presented) A scheduling system according to Claim 1 which further comprises a user input processor for processing user inputs.

12.   (original) A scheduling system according to Claim 11 wherein, in use, at least one user input comprises a broadcast element and the user input processor comprises an editing tool for use in editing broadcast elements.

13.   (previously presented) A scheduling system according to Claim 11 wherein the user input processor is adapted to sort user input data according to type.

14.   (currently amended) A scheduling system according to Claim 11 for use in supporting more than one broadcast channel during the same broadcast period, wherein the user input processor is adapted to sort [[user]] users' input data according to channel.

15.   (currently amended) A scheduling system according to Claim 11 wherein the user input processor is adapted to parse [[user]] users' input data.

Response to Office Action of: April 10, 2008
Response Dated: October 10, 2008
Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR BROADCAST COMMUNICATIONS

App. No.: 10/550,180
Inventor: MUELLER
Examiner: ANDRAMUNO

16.   (currently amended) A scheduling system according to Claim 11 wherein, in use, stored [[user]] users' input data identifies at least one broadcast element, and wherein the user input processor is adapted to measure a number of times said broadcast element is so identified.

17.   (original) A scheduling system according to Claim 16 wherein the scheduler is adapted to rank broadcast elements in accordance with the number of times the elements are so identified.

18.   (previously presented) A scheduling system according to Claim 11 wherein, in use, the user input processor is connected to deliver processed user inputs for storage in the user input data store for use by the scheduler in scheduling broadcast elements.

19.   (previously presented) A scheduling system according to Claim 11 wherein the system is provided with a first output for scheduled broadcast elements for broadcasting and a second output for processed user inputs and/or broadcast elements.

20.   (previously presented) A scheduling system according to Claim 1, further comprising time dependent control means to control the action of the scheduler according to time period.

21.   (original) A scheduling system according to Claim 20 wherein the time period comprises part of a day, such that the action of the scheduler can be controlled to be different at different times of day.

22.   (original) A scheduling system according to Claim 20 wherein the time period comprises one or more days, such that the action of the scheduler can be adjusted to be different on at least two different days.

23.   (previously presented) A scheduling system according to Claim 20 wherein the scheduler is adapted to select and schedule broadcast elements, and wherein the time dependent control means is adapted to control the selection of said one or more broadcast elements in a time dependent manner.

24.   (previously presented) A scheduling system according to Claim 20 wherein the scheduler is adapted to schedule broadcast elements by applying at least one rule, and wherein the time dependent control means is adapted to control the rule or rules applied in a time dependent manner.

25.   (previously presented) A scheduling system according to Claim 1 adapted for connection to a communication system for receiving user inputs.

26.   (original) A scheduling system according to Claim 25 having a response time of the order of ten minutes between receipt of a user input and delivery of a response which is at least partly dependent on the result of a scheduling operation by the scheduler in relation to the received user input.

27.   (original) A scheduling system according to Claim 26 wherein said delivery of a response comprises broadcasting of a broadcast element.

28.   (original) A scheduling system according to Claim 26 wherein said delivery of a response comprises the output of a communication in reply to the user input.

29.   (currently amended) A broadcast assembly system for assembling broadcast elements for broadcast, the system comprising an asset store for storing one or more broadcast elements, and an asset processor for processing broadcast elements, wherein the asset store, in use, stores at least one rule or algorithm for use in assembling from users' inputs broadcast elements for broadcast and the asset processor provides at least one tool for processing broadcast elements by editing.

Response to Office Action of: April 10, 2008
Response Dated: October 10, 2008
Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR BROADCAST COMMUNICATIONS

App. No.: 10/550,180
Inventor: MUELLER
Examiner: ANDRAMUNO

30.   (original) A broadcast assembly system according to Claim 29, the system further comprising a scheduler for assembling broadcast elements by scheduling.

31.   (previously presented) A broadcast assembly system according to Claim 29 wherein at least one stored rule or algorithm comprises a scheduling criterion for use in scheduling broadcast elements for broadcast.

32.   (cancelled)

33.   (previously presented) A broadcast assembly system according to Claim 31, wherein the asset processor comprises means to create or modify at least one scheduling criterion.

34.   (currently amended) A broadcast assembly system according to Claim [[32]] 33, wherein at least one stored rule or algorithm is time dependent.

35.   (previously presented) A broadcast assembly system according to Claim 29, wherein the asset processor comprises means for creating or modifying one or more broadcast elements.

36.   (original) An interactive gaming system comprising a broadcast assembly system according to Claim 35.

37.   (currently amended) A broadcast assembly system according to Claim [[32]] 33, further comprising a user input processor, and wherein the scheduling criterion comprises a rule or algorithm for responding to processed user inputs.

38.   (currently amended) A broadcasting system comprising:

i)   an asset store for storing broadcast elements;

ii)   a user input data store for storing [[user]] users' input data;

iii)   an asset processor for processing broadcast elements; and

iv)   a user input processor for processing user inputs,

wherein the user input processor is adapted to process user input to provide [[user]] users' input data for storage in the user input data store and the asset processor is adapted to process broadcast elements for storage in the asset store.

39.   (original) A broadcasting system according to Claim 38 wherein the asset processor comprises an encoder for encoding broadcast elements.

40.   (previously presented) A broadcasting system according to Claim 38 wherein the asset processor comprises an editing tool for editing broadcast elements.

41.   (previously presented) A broadcasting system according to Claim 38 wherein the asset processor comprises a programming tool for programming data and/or processes relating to broadcast elements.

42.   (previously presented) A broadcasting system according to Claim 38 wherein the asset processor comprises a programming tool for programming scheduling criteria.

43.   (currently amended) A broadcasting system according to Claim 38 wherein, in use, stored [[user]] users' input data comprises at least one broadcast element.

44.   (previously presented) A broadcasting system according to Claim 38 arranged to provide more than one channel for broadcasting broadcast elements.

45.   (original) A broadcasting system according to Claim 44 arranged such that two or more channels each carry a unique set of broadcast elements.

Response to Office Action of: April 10, 2008
Response Dated: October 10, 2008
Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR BROADCAST COMMUNICATIONS

App. No.: 10/550,180
Inventor: MUELLER
Examiner: ANDRAMUNO

46.   (original) A broadcasting system according to Claim 44 arranged such that two or more channels share at least one broadcast element from the asset store.

47.   (currently amended) A broadcasting system according to Claim 44 arranged such that two or more channels share at least one broadcast element from stored [[user]] users' input data.

48.   (previously presented) A broadcasting system according to Claim 38, for supporting more than one independently interactive broadcasting channel.

49.   (previously presented) A user input processor for use with a broadcasting system according to Claim 38, having an input for receiving user inputs, at least one processing tool for processing received user inputs, a first output for processed user inputs for use by the broadcasting system in scheduling broadcast elements and a second output for processed user inputs.

50.   (original) A user input processor according to Claim 49 wherein the second output is adapted for connection to the Internet.

51.   (previously presented) A user input processor according to Claim 49, for use in supporting more than one broadcast channel during the same broadcast period, wherein the user input processor is adapted to sort user inputs according to channel.

52.   (currently amended) A method of broadcasting, said method comprising the steps of:
i)   receiving a list of broadcast elements;
ii)   receiving a user input users' inputs relating to at least one broadcast element, and
iii)   responding to the received user input users' inputs.

Response to Office Action of: April 10, 2008
Response Dated: October 10, 2008
Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR BROADCAST COMMUNICATIONS

App. No.: 10/550,180
Inventor: MUELLER
Examiner: ANDRAMUNO

53. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 52 wherein [[a]] received ~~user input comprises~~ users' inputs comprise at least one broadcast element in addition to the listed broadcast elements.

54. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 52 wherein [[a]] received ~~user input comprises~~ users' inputs comprise at least one identifier for a broadcast element from the list.

55. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 53 wherein step iii) comprises broadcasting the additional broadcast element together with at least one broadcast element from the list.

56. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 52 wherein step iii) comprises outputting a reply to the user input.

57. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 53 wherein said reply comprises an estimated broadcast time for the additional broadcast element.

58. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 52 wherein step iii) comprises re-ordering the list of broadcast elements.

59. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 52 wherein step iii) is performed in an hour or less of step ii).

60. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 52 wherein step iii) is performed in ten minutes or less after step ii).

61. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 52 wherein step iii) is performed in two minutes or less after step ii).

62.   (previously presented) A method according to Claim 52 wherein step iii) is performed in ten seconds or less after step ii).

63.   (currently amended) A method according to Claim 52, further comprising the steps of:

iv)   receiving ~~at least one user input~~ users' inputs identifying at least one of the broadcast elements on the list; and

v)   generating a re-ordered list of programme broadcast from said list, in accordance with the ~~at least one user input~~ users' inputs.

64.   (currently amended) A method of assembling broadcast elements for broadcasting, said method comprising the steps of:

i)   processing at least one broadcast element and loading the processed broadcast element to an asset store;

ii)   receiving, via a user input, data relating to at least one broadcast element in the asset store; and

iii)   storing one or more rules or algorithms for use in assembling a set of broadcast elements for broadcast in accordance with received users' input data.

65.   (original) A method according to Claim 64, further comprising the step of assembling a set of broadcast elements for broadcast in accordance with received data and at least one stored rule or algorithm.

66.   (previously presented) A method according to Claim 64 wherein at least one stored rule or algorithm is time dependent such that an assembled set of broadcast elements is different at different times.

67.   (previously presented) A method according to Claim 64, further comprising the step of receiving, via a user input, at least one broadcast element, and wherein an

Response to Office Action of: April 10, 2008
Response Dated: October 10, 2008
Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR BROADCAST COMMUNICATIONS

App. No.: 10/550,180
Inventor: MUELLER
Examiner: ANDRAMUNO

assembled set of broadcast elements comprises at least one broadcast element received via a user input.

68.   (previously presented) A method according to Claim 64 which further comprises the step of broadcasting an assembled set.